

And He Taught Them Using Parables (Mark 4:1-20)

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And He Taught Them Using Parables (Mark 4:1-20)

I guess you have caught on by now. Just about every message, I begin the message with a simple

story or analogy from my life and make comparison to the text. I do this cause I know what catches my attention in preaching, and I'm banking that it's the same with you. Well this is actually pretty Biblical, because Jesus did a very similar thing when relating parables to his listeners. Remember Mark is an action gospel 18 miracles only 4 parables so it makes sense that his parables are directed to the servants of God. Although this parable has many

I. The Parable is Chosen - The title of our message tonight is "And He Taught Them... Have you ever wondered why Parable Parable = something thrown alongside something else

A. Captivating Response - Jesus was exiled from the synagogue, rejected so now his net was tattered. Out in open. People ^{Parables help us} back & forth Parables were a way to capture attn, an illustrative story to help the listeners attn. My own fear

B. Customary Reception - The people were accustom to hearing parables. This was a common tool used for teaching. When the prophet when coming to David used parable, Rahab used parables

C. Clear Reality - Jesus is conveying spiritual abstract truths. Things that may be difficult to grasp. The parable takes abstract truth and using concrete terms exposes a clear reality. People think in pictures. Faith Heil ^{Abraham}

D. Compelled Reflection - The parable compels the person to stop, reflect, and discover the truth. Worst thing to do for a kid is do homework for them. It also lays the responsibility at their feet. Fertile heart finds. Hardens heart ^{no time}

II. The Parable is Conveyed - Now in verses 1-9 we read what parable Jesus conveyed to the people. I'll be very basic & brief.

A. The Parable is Simple - This parable was so common and simple as may be to be going on nearby. Look at that Sower over there

B. The Parable has a Sower - This is the activity of the parable. Mark about a char. This is of particular importance to disciples ^{years of}

C. The Parable has a Seed - This is the all important character of the parable. What happens to the seed that is sown

D. The Parable has a Soil - 3-4 Good ground is too hard, 5-6 - Stony or shallow ground, 7 Thorny Strangling ground 8-9 ^{good ground} ^{good farmer}

III. The Parable is Characterized in vs 10-12 There is this detour and upon a first read seems unrelated, yet it is ^{what's being conveyed} very much a part of

A. We See Surety in Jesus Words vs 10-11

- 1) ...this parable has many applications and uses, it has one main point of emphasis that I want to show that will be of great benefit to the servants of God.

1) The parable makes truth more clear to those willing to hear, but makes truth more obscure to those that lack spiritual concern. Do you have an ear to hear? Do you long for more?

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Vs 10 Jesus was being asked about this parable. And in vers 11 Jesus assures them that it is given unto them to know the mystery (that which was previously hidden now ~~is~~ revealed) of the Kingdom of God. Why, because. They were the soft hearted ones, the ones that desired and sought after truth, they were themselves the good ground in vs 8.

B. We See Severity in Jesus Words -

But Jesus goes on in vs 11b-12, What?!!? Is God hiding truth from them. I thought God was not willing that any should perish but all come to repentance. Yes God is willing but many people aren't their hearts are hardened, shallow, or crowded.

What little that is given is taken away. The hard hearted person can not be converted + forgiven Lvs 13.

C. We See Summary in Jesus Words

It basically boils down to vs 10. He that hath ears to hear let him hear. The seed falls on all sorts of ground, on the hard, shallow or crowded soil those folks that haven't an ear to hear the Gospel. They will be darkened further.

To the tender hearted, the humbled heart the ~~best~~ ground of an honest heart they ^{hear} may.

IV. Parable is Clarified (vs 14-20)

Jesus then begins to explain the parable. Basically some hearts are

hardened, stony, crowded, & some ready.

A. A Main Point is Emphasised - Now the thing to remember about a parable is that it was to be heard not read. In this few seconds of some little people needed to make an instant appraisal. Although there are many truths in parables as we study, there is but one main truth, Parable \neq Allegory; Pilgrims Progress. So what is the main point to be gathered? What flashed in the minds of the hearers? The main point to be emphasised is not that in different soils nothing grew, but in the end some seed did grow. ~~In the end the good~~

B. A Marvelous Principle is Encouraging
Looking at the parable mathematically it does not look good. For $\frac{3}{4}$ of Parable seed sowing does not look successful, it could cause the sower to doubt the seed. It would cause one to think that the word of God isn't successful. That's why you don't measure success in Kingdom of God mathematically. If you did it mathematically in Life of Jesus you would think he was unsuccessful. Ch 3 blasphemed, accused, family & friends thought he was crazy. Yet the seed did fall on good

V. Closing

Story on final Page

1) ...the good ground and the seed got together and bore fruit. Again, those who have a softened and responsive heart shall be given more, but those who have a hardened heart shall have what little that is given to them taken away. Which leads us to our last thought...

2) ...seed did fall on good ground! There will be a great harvest! Jesus said in **Matthew 16:18**... *I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.* **Galatians 6:9** *And let us not be weary in well doing: for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not.* To you and I this parable states emphatically, be patient, sow the seed, leave the rest to God, the harvest is sure! **Isaiah 55:11** *So shall my word be that goeth forth out of my mouth: it shall not return unto me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it.* **Psalms 126:6** *He that goeth forth and weepeth, bearing precious seed, shall doubtless come again with rejoicing, bringing his sheaves with him.*

North Korea is one of the most Communist societies in the world - there are 22 million people cocooned from birth to death in an atheistic nightmare. God is banned. Well, what you may not know is that R. J. Thomas was a missionary to China in the middle of the 19th century. He had a heart for Korea before Communism existed, but Korea, even back then in the middle of the 19th century, was a hermit kingdom - no one was allowed from a foreign land into the nation. So R. J. Thomas, because of his heart for the Korean people, went to China and he bided his time until it was expedient for him to go into Korea. So in 1865 the opportunity came that he had been waiting a lifetime for, and he went on an American ship called the SS General Sherman. That ship was going to steam up the Tai-dong River to the capital, Pyongyang, in the hopes of luring Koreans to the boat to trade with them - that's all the Americans were interested in. But Thomas bought a berth on that ship, hoping to meet some Korean scholars in Pyongyang who spoke Chinese, and so he brought Scriptures in the Chinese language so that he might give them to those scholars, that they might discover the truth of the gospel. The trip of the SS General Sherman was ill-fated, because

in port along the way to the capital some of the General Sherman's crew killed three Korean men in a barroom brawl. When they reached the capital in Pyongyang, the rumours had grown to such an extent that it was impossible for them to berth the ship, and the people of Pyongyang were convinced that these foreigners had come for their children to make soup out of their eyeballs! There was nothing for the ship to do but to turn around and head down the river, but they struck a sandbank. Seeing them stranded, the Korean defence lashed a series of small ships together, and set them on fire. They drifted to surround the General Sherman, which caught fire also, and everyone aboard had to leap into the river - and as they waded to shore, they pulled out their swords, but were all clubbed to death by the waiting Koreans. Thomas also jumped out of that boat to wade to shore, but before he could speak a club swung with murderous force and dashed his brains into the water. He never spoke to one Korean, but his killer noticed when his body emerged to the surface that he hadn't a cutlass in his hand, but he was brandishing a bundle of books. He wondered had he killed a good man, and he picked up a couple of the sodden books. Drying them off, he separated the leaves that he saw were nicely printed - he couldn't read Chinese, so he decided to paper the outside of his house with the pages, as was the custom of the time. Now imagine a house papered on the outside with the Bible! You can imagine the astonishment as he returned from the fields day after day to find Chinese-speaking Korean scholars reading around his house God's holy word! One of those Korean scholars became a Christian by reading the gospel portions that were plastered on his house. A generation later that man's nephew assisted in the first translation of the New Testament into Korean. Thomas never lived to see the fruit, but was there fruit? Oh yes, there was fruit, because God's Word and God's honour depends on it! As that club swung toward his brow, what do you think he thought? The trip had been a waste, a tragic mistake, he dies, his life purpose unfulfilled, potential unrealised. Maybe to everybody else his death was a mystery, but not to Jesus, the sower of the seed.